

# LITTLE SISTERS OF THE POOR

*Serving the elderly poor  
in Chicago since 1876.*



## ST. MARY'S HOME

### SAVE THE DATE

*Travinia- 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Trivia Night  
Saturday, January 25, 2014  
6:30 p.m.*

## Sweet Home Chicago St. Mary's Welcomes Mother Theresa

The weeks of great anticipation finally culminated in celebration as we welcomed Mother Theresa at the beginning of November.

In the weeks leading up to her arrival, everyone pitched in to prepare the Home for the Chicago-themed welcome. The Residents, volunteers and staff dressed up in their favorite Chicago team apparel to convey our team spirit and enthusiasm for our newest member. As she entered the Home for the first time, Mother remarked, "Well, you certainly love your sports."

It wouldn't be a true "taste of the city" without Chicago-style hot dogs for lunch. Activities Director Helen Miner, made sure Mother received the first one, hot off the grill, that was set up in front.

There was so much excitement over her arrival and so many people to meet that we couldn't contain her welcome to one day.

The next day Residents and staff presented a "tour" of Chicago from our "bus" in the auditorium. We took Mother everywhere from the Shedd Aquarium to the Lincoln Park Zoo to Orchestra Hall and Navy Pier, with several other sights in between. Residents played their parts to bring the tour stops to life.

At the Oz Park stop, Mother received gifts of a brain (to navigate the City streets); courage (to be brave enough to drive them); and a heart (to come to love all of us here) from the Resident thespians. Dorothy stole the show when

she presented Mother with a lost and found certificate to come back here because, because, because, "there's no place like home."

The final stop was the "Rock n Roll McDonald's" where staff served up ice cream sundaes for all to enjoy.

A native of San Francisco, Mother Theresa attributes her vocation to her experience volunteering with the Little Sisters at St. Anne's Home in her home town. Since becoming a Sister she has traveled far across the country to the Little Sisters' Home in Pawtucket, RI, back to the Midwest to become administrator at Holy Family Residence in St. Paul, MN, and now to Sweet Home Chicago.



*Residents Ralph Doffin aka the scarecrow and Brother Regis Wojciak aka the lion before they present their "gifts" to Mother Theresa.*



*Mother at the hometown "huddle."*

Fall, 2013

ST. MARY'S HOME  
2325 N. Lakewood Ave.  
Chicago, IL 60614

# LITTLE SISTERS OF THE POOR



Some of our dietary staff (L to R): Miriam Ortiz, Maribel Rivera, Malcolm Miller, Henry Williford, Martha Zurita, Quaanisha Street, Hermila Perez, Jessie Lucas, Valerie Phillips, Lucrecia Chaconon and Ligia Schmidt.

## Our Dynamic Kitchen

About one half hour before the doors open for breakfast, Residents of St. Mary's are gathering in the area outside the dining room. A similar scene will be repeated at dinner (lunch) and at supper. Meals here are more than good food. They are events our Residents look forward to eagerly.

And no one is more aware of the important role meals play in our Residents daily routine than Ligia Schmidt, dietary manager, and each of the members of the dietary department team.

Starting at 6:30 every morning, the dedicated and talented kitchen team – 7 dietary aides, 7 cooks and 5 dishwashers – work tirelessly to fulfill requirements and satisfy the preferences of our Residents. In the course of a single day, 288 meals will be prepared and served in our two dining rooms.

Creating nutritious meals that will put a smile on a Resident's face is the goal. Meeting that objective calls for flexibility and creativity. Almost all 76 Residents have a unique dietary needs – maybe it's salt-free dishes, pureed food or foods to be avoided due to allergies. In following with the traditional Catholic practice, all Friday meals are served without meat. Because the Home cares for Residents

of different ethnicities and creeds, the dietary department also works hard to include foods that meet those requirements. When family members bring a loved one's favorite food as a treat, kitchen staff works with the family to incorporate the special item into the menu.

"Each day the dietary team gives 110 percent to meet the varied dietary needs of our Residents," says Ligia, who has been our dietary manager since 2002. She previously worked at Ravenswood Hospital after emigrating from Ecuador and came to St. Mary's when the hospital closed. Ligia and staff prepare three



(Seated L to R) Henry Lee, Mary Ann Nichols and Marion Smith all "satisfied customers" who agree that "they love the variety of the menu."

home cooked meals a day – breakfast, dinner (lunch) and supper, always including a savory soup at the evening meal. "The food we serve each day comes from the hard work of Srs. Michael and Caroline as they go out begging businesses for food donations," Ligia points out (see Begging – True to Our Mission at right). The kitchen is able to do such a great job because of the generosity of our benefactors. Very rarely is there a need to spend out-of-pocket for food, except for milk and sometimes meat.

### Food for Thought

In a single week, St. Mary's kitchen dishes up:

2	gallons of ice cream
30	dozen eggs
280	lbs. of mashed potatoes
240	lbs. of chicken
350	pieces of toast



### Family, Friends and Faith Celebrating 25 Years as a Little Sister

St. Mary's marked the occasion of Sister Michael Teresa's silver jubilee with a two-day celebration. The highlight of the event was Mass, concelebrated by Bishop William Callahan of La Crosse, WI, and Fathers Patrick Marshall; Robert Joseph Switanowski, OFM; Conv., Bob Lombardo, CFR; Luke Poczworowski, OFM; Thomas Croak, CM; and our Chaplain Mike Ruthenberg, O.P.

The event concluded with a "show" featuring highlights from Sr. Michael's life.



**William Milligan of Pioneer Meat takes a break to talk with Sr. Michael and Caroline.**

## Begging: True to Our Mission

It's 6 a.m. Tuesday morning as Sr. Michael and Caroline get into the refrigerated van. They have already mapped out their route, and as their driver Jose Ambrosio pulls out of the driveway, they begin reciting the rosary on behalf of the benefactors they will see today who will be providing fruits and vegetables for the Residents. The two have been going out "begging" almost every day since they have been living in St. Mary's Home, continuing a 174-year-old tradition begun by our Foundress Saint Jeanne Jugan in Saint Servan, France.

Today they are traveling to the Chicago International Produce Market, to meet with wholesale distributors, begging for this week's provisions as the Sisters have done since arriving in Chicago in 1876. The first stop is Panama Banana where they see Carmen, one of the very few women who work on the "market floor." She has fresh chayote squash and bananas for them.

On the way is John Maentanis who has been with City Wide Produce for 37 years. He thanks them for their prayers and asks "what he can do for them." While he appreciates the mission, John says what he appreciates even more is Sr. Michael's knowledge of football. Among the familiar faces at the market are cousins T. J. Fleming and Rob Strube, III of Strube Celery & Vegetable. Their great-grandfather started the 100-year old company and their grandfather Bob Strube, Sr. started the Chicago Food Depository in 1978.

"I'll never forget when T.J.'s dad, Tim, said, 'Sister, this is not a donation it's an investment'," Sr. Michael remarked.

"The best kept secret in the world is how many good people there are," said Sr. Michael, who has been begging for more than 19 years. "It is a privilege to be asked to do what Jeanne Jugan did herself," she explained.

Most of the folks she and Sr. Caroline will talk to this morning are third and fourth generation, with relationships between their family and the Little Sisters that go further back.

Rich Domagala of Evergreen International, explains that if you are able to make money then you can give back to the community.

By the time the Sisters finish, Jose has completely packed the van to the ceiling. It's hard to pinpoint the total weight of the produce they bring back that day but Sr. Michael estimates it to be more than 1,000 pounds, based on the weight of potatoes and celery at 50 lbs. per bag, and the fruit at about 30 lbs.

On a weekly basis, Sisters Michael and Caroline see 50 companies for produce, meat, eggs and many dried goods as well as coffee and tea – ingredients the dietary department will use to provide our Residents with nourishing and delicious meals every day.

## Resident Profile Frank De More

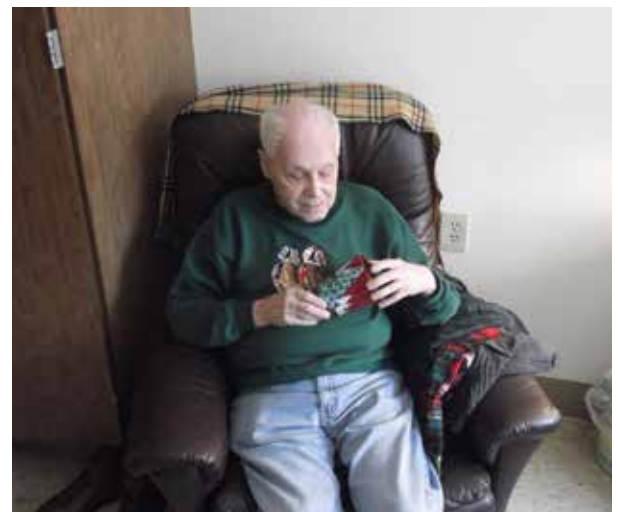
When Residents and guests visit our gift shop during this holiday season, they will see hand-painted keepsake tins and candleholders designed and painted by new Resident Frank De More. He will also be creating some hand-painted glass and other items.

Frank is happy to share his talent with his new home and continue pursuing a life-long hobby. He never went to art school, although he had a chance for a scholarship after he won an art contest. "I am self-taught," he says, explaining he never had the patience for school. He recalls that his three football-playing brothers used to tease him because he preferred brushes to the pigskin.

While he pursued his art as an avocation, and made pocket money producing floral landscapes for friends and neighbors, Frank's main profession was as a bellman at the famous Ambassador East hotel on Chicago's Gold Coast, where he met the likes of Elizabeth Taylor and Joan Crawford. The generous celebrities and wealthy clientele of the hotel would often present Frank with a gift in appreciation for his service. One of the most unusual he received has to be three frozen pheasants, which he carried home on the bus.

Growing up in a large Italian family, good food was a centerpiece of daily life. His mother "devoted her life to the kitchen stove," preparing homemade dishes for as many as 100 people during holidays when the De More residence was the gathering place for friends and family.

Frank's happy to be a Resident at St. Mary's and looks forward to making a contribution to Little Sisters through his artwork.



**Frank examines his newest Christmas canister.**

**Beg - verb**

**gerund or present participle: begging**

1. ask (someone) earnestly or humbly for something.
2. ask for something, typically food or money, as charity or a gift.

# Mother's Message

By: Mother Theresa



Dear Family and Friends,

Christ's greetings to you!

As we prepare our hearts for the coming of our Lord during the season of Advent, which marks the beginning of the Church's liturgical year, we contemplate new beginnings with the birth of Christ who makes all things new. It gives us an opportunity to renew our faith as we pause to acknowledge our blessings.

By now you may have heard in the news about Pope Francis' newest document called *Evangelii Gaudium*, or "The Joy of the Gospel" in English. It is filled with many wonderful ideas and themes for us to ponder. He encourages us to rediscover the beauty of being on a journey towards our encounter with Jesus.

The gift of Christmas is joy. We are reminded of this each year when we hear the story of the Annunciation as the angel Gabriel greets Mary at the beginning of the gospel with an invitation to "rejoice, and be glad." She is presented with God's incredible plan to bring the "good news" to us His children by becoming one of us – the joy is Christ – the summit of our faith and hope.

The New Year lets us make new commitments. For me personally, I am looking forward to getting to know everyone and continuing the good work of the Little Sisters here in Chicago through the example of our Foundress St. Jeanne Jugan.

She always thanked her benefactors by praying for them — and thanking God at the same time. "God has blessed me," she said, "because I always thanked his Providence... What gratitude we owe our benefactors ... What could we do for the elderly without them?"

Today we continue on the path she began – caring for the elderly poor and relying on our kind and generous benefactors to enable us to fulfil our mission. We too pray daily for your intentions. May God bless you and those you love.

On behalf of the Little Sisters, Residents and staff of St. Mary's Home, we wish you a very joyful, peaceful and very Merry Christmas.

# LITTLE SISTERS OF THE POOR

Visit us at [www.littlesistersofthepoorchicago.org](http://www.littlesistersofthepoorchicago.org)

## News in Jugan...

By: Angie Salinas, Jugan Terrace *manager*

As always there is something exciting and new at Jugan Terrace – facility improvements, added activities or a smiling new face.

We recently replaced our washers and dryers which were much older than we thought. After regular frequent service calls it was time to talk with our vendor and update the machines. Since replacing them, in September we have not had any issues and everyone is happy, especially Essie Nickens who said, "Now when I put my clothes in the dryer they come out dry."

We are blessed to have a wonderful volunteer, Therese Hawks, a resource nurse who has really become part of our family over the past few months.

Once a week Therese conducts wellness checks and is available to answer Residents'

health questions or concerns. She also is helping plan and organize activities such as our monthly book club, movie nights and our recent Halloween party, which included lively music, Halloween trivia, food and treats made by Residents. Dressing up was optional, but a few adventurous people got into the spirit of the day. The best costume went to none other than Therese, completely unrecognizable as a witch. Our runner up was a bag lady, with bags covering her clothing and walker. I threw on a red hooded cape, carried a basket of treats and appeared as Little Red Riding Hood.

The Residents were excited to go on a lunch outing with a cozy group of 10 to The Countryside Grill, a family restaurant operating in Des Plaines since 1933. Everyone enjoyed the good food and company. We will definitely plan future outings in the spring.



*Resident Essie Nickens first one to use the new machines.*



*Book Club members (L to R)-- Donna Davis, Therese Hawks, Mary Fitzsimmons and Betty Bartolak.*

## ✂ Double Your Gift!

**You may be able to double or triple your contribution to St. Mary's Home through a matching gift program with your employer. Many larger companies match charitable donations. Find out if yours does by asking your Human Resources department.**

Dear Sisters,  
Please accept my contribution of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ to help support your mission to provide a loving Home for the Residents of St. Mary's Home.

I have submitted for a matching gift through my employer.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Company: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

All donations are tax-deductible to the full extent of the law.

**Donations can also be made online at**

**[www.littlesistersofthepoorchicago.org](http://www.littlesistersofthepoorchicago.org) and click "donate."**